

Golf/Utility Cart Operation Program

Originally Endorsed on May 26, 2009 by the University Safety Committee – Brooks Baker, Chair

1) Introduction – Purpose & Scope

The effective date of this program is August 1, 2009.

This program provides guidelines for the operation of electric or gas-powered carts, golf carts and similar type utility vehicles (hereafter “carts”) on University of Alabama at Birmingham (hereafter “UAB”) campus properties, including traveling to/from campus locations that may be separated by property owned by others or require travel on public roadways to reach the desired campus location.

This program establishes proper safety procedures and practices, which will promote safe operations and provide our students, faculty, staff, and visitors a safe environment.

This program does not apply to automobiles or trucks that are licensed by the State of Alabama for use on public roads. Those vehicles and drivers should comply with the guidelines established in the UAB Vehicle Safety Management Program, the *You and UAB Handbook*, and other UAB programs and policies.

The UAB Vehicle Safety Management Program is available on the Office of Risk Management and Insurance website (<https://riskmgt.hs.uab.edu>). If you are unsure which program applies, contact the Office of Risk Management and Insurance.

The purpose of this program is to define who may operate a cart, the required training for cart drivers, and when carts may be used, which includes, but may not be limited to:

- Transporting persons with physical disabilities
- Transporting items long distances that are too large/bulky to be carried by hand
- Transporting UAB guests
- Responding to emergencies
- Providing access to areas where a licensed vehicle may have difficulty navigating
- Avoiding damage to sidewalks, landscaping or other property that may occur with traditional licensed road-use vehicles

2) General Guidelines

Members of the UAB community, including faculty, students, staff, contractors, and vendors, and all carts used on campus are governed by this program. This program does not apply to construction contractors using carts within the perimeter of a construction site but does apply at all other times while traveling on the UAB campus. All cart drivers must meet the following criteria before operating a cart on UAB property:

- Possess a valid U.S. driver’s license and be at least 18 years of age.
- Have knowledge and comply with all State of Alabama motor vehicle laws and all applicable local laws related to the use of carts on public roads and sidewalks.

Additionally, drivers of carts owned, leased, rented, or borrowed by UAB are subject to the following requirements:

- The driver must provide authorization for the Office of Risk Management and Insurance to obtain a motor vehicle report (MVR) before operating a cart. UAB’s insurance company will review the MVR of the individual and accept or reject the driver based on criteria established by the underwriter.

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Approval to operate a cart is the same as for any licensed vehicle. Approved drivers shall immediately notify their supervisors if and when their driver's license is suspended or revoked.

- Complete a Cart Safety Training Program, which is available on [the UAB Environmental Health and Safety website](#) under the Training tab, and obtain a certificate of completion. The certificate should be kept in the employee's training file.
- In addition to these guidelines, University Hospital Guest Services Department shuttle drivers must comply with the Hospital Guest Services Internal Shuttle Policy and Procedure Standard.

Any failure to adhere to this program, including failing to follow all motor vehicle laws and safe driving practices, may result in appropriate disciplinary action or suspension/revocation of the cart driver's privileges. This includes standard safe practices and courteous operations recognizing that the carts will be operated where pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic is common.

Do not operate carts on sidewalks. In addition to being hazardous to pedestrians, Birmingham City Code Section 4-5-35 states that it is unlawful for any person to drive a motorized device, except for a motorized wheelchair, on a City sidewalk. Operating carts on sidewalks may result in the revocation of all driving privileges (cart and automobile).

For use on public roads, all carts acquired after the effective date of this program must meet the National Highway Safety and Traffic Administration (NHSTA) Standard 500 (49CFR Part 571.500), which is applicable to low-speed vehicles. The Standard may be reviewed at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/cars/rules/rulings/lsv/lsv.html>.

Other State laws or local ordinances may apply to the use of golf carts and other motorized transportation devices. It is the responsibility of the driver to know, understand, and adhere to all applicable laws, ordinances, and rules. The cart driver and the driver's department are responsible for any fines, fees, or penalties arising out of any violation of law, ordinance, policy, or program.

All golf and utility carts used at UAB are subject to minimum safety equipment/design specifications that include:

- No fewer than four wheels should be touching the ground/roadway at all times.
- All equipment must be in good working order.
- The cart must be equipped with a "Slow Moving Vehicle" sign visible from the front and rear.
- The rear must have a reflective triangle, including trailers attached to a cart.
- If operated after dusk and before dawn, headlights, taillights and brake lights (2 of each) must be functional.
- A yellow or amber flashing light(s) visible from 360 degrees shall be in operation while the vehicle is in motion.
- A horn with an activation button/switch must be within reach of the driver.
- The vehicle must have an ignition/on-off key to prevent unauthorized use.
- The vehicle must have a parking-brake with adequate strength to hold the cart at least a 15-degree angle.
- An audible (at least 80 decibels at 10 feet) back-up alarm when placed in reverse.

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3) Cart Registration/Signage/Driver Approval

Equipment Accounting will maintain a list of all UAB owned or leased carts used on campus in accordance with standard UAB asset accounting policies. Each department is responsible for furnishing information to Equipment Accounting on the sale or transfer of any cart as it occurs.

Each department will be responsible for maintaining a list of persons authorized to operate the cart and other records as required. The authorization/approval process to drive a cart is the same as any other UAB owned, leased, or rented vehicle. The MVR Release and Request Form is available on the Office of Risk Management and Insurance website (<https://riskmgt.hs.uab.edu>).

4) Cart Driver Rules

Carts shall be operated with the utmost courtesy, care, and consideration for the safety and convenience of other vehicles and pedestrians. In congested pedestrian areas, operators must either park or reduce speed and proceed at a pace consistent with that of pedestrians. Pedestrians shall be afforded the right-of-way at all times. Pedestrians, as defined in this document, refer to persons walking, jogging, inline skating, skateboarding, bicycling, or those in wheelchairs or mobility assistance devices.

Carts shall be operated in accordance with the following specific rules:

- All occupants in the vehicle shall keep hands, arms, legs, and feet within the confines of the cart while it is in motion.
- Drivers shall stop carts at all blind intersections and sound their horns before cautiously proceeding.
- Special care shall be taken while driving carts through parking lots to observe traffic and vehicles pulling in/out of parking spaces. Carts should be operated at speeds of less than 10 miles per hour in parking lots.
- Carts should operate and park only on hard surfaces unless the cart is specially designed for and used for grounds maintenance, bulk transport, or personal assistance.
- Drivers may not wear headphones, use cell phones, or use/operate any other device that may cause a distraction.
- Carts shall not be modified in any manner that affects the recommended mode of operation, speed, or safety of the vehicle.
- Never exceed the maximum load capacity recommended by the manufacturer, either by the number of occupants or weight of the passengers and load.
- Employees shall not operate carts registered to other departments unless approval has been granted by the supervisor or the department to which the cart is owned.
- Drivers of carts that are not equipped with turn indicators shall use appropriate hand signals.
- All accidents involving carts shall be reported immediately to the supervisor of the department to which the cart is registered, and a police report shall be filed with UAB Police at the time of the accident. Regardless of whether property or personal injury occurred, accidents should be

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reported to the UAB Office of Risk Management and Insurance and to the UAB Environmental Health & Safety Department.

- Each driver shall be responsible for providing timely notification of safety and maintenance concerns to the supervisor of the department to which the cart is registered. The supervisor will contact UAB Automotive Services for repairs.
- In the event a cart is decorated for a special event, the decorations must be securely attached in a manner that will not cause damage or obstruct the driver's vision in any direction.
- Carts shall not be driven through covered walkways (breezeway) except under the following circumstances:
 - Emergencies, medical, police or safety operations,
 - Providing maintenance service at a location in a specific building to which equipment and supplies, but not people, are being transported to the worksite, and
 - Providing transportation for individuals with disabilities.
- Carts shall be parked and operated in such manner that they do not impede or interfere with average pedestrian or vehicular traffic flow on roadways, ramps, or sidewalks.
- Unless loading or unloading cargo or passengers, carts shall not be parked within 20 feet of the entrance or exit of any building, except at loading docks. At no time should a parked cart block the ingress or egress to any building.
- Carts will not be parked:
 - Fire lanes
 - Metered parking spaces
 - Handicap-accessible parking spaces (unless the proper permit is acquired and displayed)
 - Reserved parking spaces (other than those spaces reserved for carts)
 - Places that would impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic
 - Areas that would prevent handicap accessibility (e.g., sidewalks, ramps, or handicapped-accessible areas)
- Carts shall only be operated within the confines of campus or to reach a university facility that may be separated by public roads or property owned by others.
- The cart batteries should never be used to jump-start other vehicles, used to power other devices, or removed for any reason other than to perform maintenance or replacement by a person trained and authorized to perform such work. Never attempt to check or add fluid/electrolyte to a battery.

5) Repairs & Maintenance

Unless prior authorization is granted by UAB Automotive Services, all repairs and maintenance shall be performed by UAB Automotive Services.

Chargers for low-speed electric vehicles must be plugged directly into a ground fault interrupter receptacle. The use of extension cords is forbidden.

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Every cart must be checked before use each day to confirm the proper operation of critical equipment, including:

- Lighting – headlights, taillights, brake lights, turn signals, flashing strobe light
- Brakes/Parking Brake
- Reflector & Signage
- Steering
- Horn
- Tire Inflation

Unless the manufacturer specifies a more frequent preventative maintenance schedule, the cart should be taken to Automotive Services for a more extensive check and to provide routine preventative maintenance every six months. In some instances, carts used in more extreme operating conditions such as use in temperature extremes, operating in dusty/dirty areas, frequent starting /stopping or hauling loads that are near the manufacturer's maximum rating may need to be placed on more frequent preventative maintenance routines to monitor wear and assure the cart receives adequate preventative maintenance.

In the event a cart has critical equipment that is not operational or is not functioning as intended, the cart shall be placed "out-of-service" and the key kept by an authorized individual to prevent the use of the cart until repairs can be completed.

6) Driver Training

All cart drivers must complete the Golf/Utility Cart Operation Program Training course before operating a cart. Any person currently operating a cart as of the effective date of the program will have 30 days to complete the required training. The online training program is available on the OH&S website on the Education and Training tab. Each department should maintain proof that the cart driver has completed the required training.

For intermittent training or daily reminders, departments may utilize the Golf/Utility Cart Operation Program Quick Reference that is available on the Office of Risk Management and Insurance website (<https://riskmgmt.hs.uab.edu>). The Golf/Utility Cart Operation Program Quick Reference is not, however, a substitute for the Golf/Utility Cart Operation Program Training course.

7) Storage & Battery Charging

The storage of each cart will be the responsibility of the department to which the unit is registered. Whenever possible, the carts should be stored in an area to allow for battery recharging and to shield the cart from foul weather. Some unauthorized persons may find the cart enticing for a joy ride, and thus, a secured storage area or the use of a chain and padlock or steering wheel lock should be considered.

- Any cart that is parked in a legal parking space in a restricted UAB parking lot or parking deck must display an appropriate parking permit.
- Parking permits are available through UAB Parking and Transportation Services.

Carts that are powered by rechargeable batteries shall have dedicated charging stations with a ground-fault electrical outlet designed and rated for such use. The recharging outlets must be designed to be locked when not in use. Just as with the cart, the keys to the charging equipment should be controlled and only provided to persons authorized to operate a cart.

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In some cases, a quick charge station may be necessary to maintain battery power between routine charging. In these situations, the location and installation of the quick charge station shall be in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer and the location may not limit or restrict access to any building, sidewalk, walkway, or exit route.

If available, the carts should be ordered with sealed or gel batteries that do not have caps to allow the fluid to be checked. The fluid in a battery is acidic and will result in an injury if it comes in contact with the skin or eyes. Inspection of any battery that can have the fluid checked by removing the caps shall only be done by personnel that is familiar with proper procedure to check the fluid, and personal protective equipment such as eye/face protection and acid-resistant gloves must be worn.